



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: October 22, 2020

Agenda Item: Amendment to open areas for the 215-02 antlerless elk B license for the 2021 hunting season

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 5 minutes

Background:

In February 2020, the department proposed and the commission adopted a season for 215-02 antlerless elk B licenses. The department inadvertently failed to identify Spotted Dog Wildlife Management Area as an area closed to elk hunting using the "private land B license," although this area has been closed to the private land B license in prior years.

The department is proposing to reintroduce the closure for fall 2021 by adding bold underlined language below:

Proposed 2021 language:

- August 15 – Day before general rifle season:
Only valid on private lands and NOT valid east of Browns Gulch Creek.
- General rifle season:
Only valid on private lands AND ALSO VALID on DNRC lands outside National Forest Boundary. NOT valid on **FWP WMAs or** east of Browns Gulch Creek.

Public Involvement Process:

Public comment will be accepted at the commission meeting on October 22, 2020. This was on oversight for 2020, most of the public that participates in this hunt anticipates that the wildlife management area will be closed, and a member of the public contacted the regional office to identify the error initially.

Alternatives and Analysis:

Should the commission choose to leave the Spotted Dog WMA open to antlerless elk hunting with the 215-02 B license, less harvest will be focused on the private land elk challenges. The purpose this hunt was to offer a tool for private landowners to address issues with elk. The objective is to provide private land elk hunting opportunity for those with permission. If the WMA remains open, we reduce the likelihood that the private land elk issues will be addressed.

Agency Recommendation and Rationale:

The department recommends the commission adopted the proposed correction to the 2020 antlerless B license for 215-02.

Proposed Motion:

I move that the commission vote to adopt the proposed closure of Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Wildlife Management Areas for the 2021 antlerless B license for 215-02.